

**CITY OF LONG BEACH
DEPARTMENT OF PARKS, RECREATION AND MARINE
PARKS AND RECREATION COMMISSION MINUTES
May 18, 2006**

I. CALL TO ORDER

The meeting of the Parks and Recreation Commission was called to order by Chris Kozaites, President, at 9:00 a.m., at the El Dorado Park West Senior Center Library. Thomas Shippey, Manager of Maintenance Operations Bureau, took roll call and confirmed a quorum.

Present: Chris Kozaites, President
Harry Saltzgaver, Vice President
Bea Antenore
Simon George
Albert Guerra
Drew Satariano
Brett Waterfield

Absent: none

Staff: Thomas Shippey, Manager, Maintenance Operations Bureau
Janet Day-Anselmo, Manager, Business Operations Bureau
Sherri Nixon-Joiner, Superintendent, Community Recreation Programs Bureau
Geoff Hall, Special Projects Officer
Leslie Hunsaker, Administrative Analyst
Jane Grobaty, Superintendent, Community Information
Mike Meyers, Community Information
Cynthia Fogg, Superintendent, Youth Services
Crystal Halona, Youth Services
Robin Black, Executive Assistant to the Director

Guests: Julie Mayr, Dog Walker
Jim Walters, Recreation Dog Park Association
James Walker
Natalie Rice, Dog Park Association Member
Dan Rothschild, Dog Park
Suzanne Mason, Deputy City Manager
Derek Barraza, California Sun & Surf
Derek Barraza, Jr., California Sun & Surf
Craig Beck, Interim Manager, Redevelopment Bureau
Cindy Young, Emerson Elementary School
Shane Coyne, PTA President at Emerson Elementary School

II. APPROVAL OF MINUTES – APRIL 20, 2006

It was moved by Commissioner Guerra and seconded by Commissioner Satariano to approve the April 20, 2006 Parks and Recreation Commission minutes. The motion carried unanimously.

III. SAMMY AWARD PRESENTATION – VIOLA SELLERS

President Kozaites stated that the Sammy Award would not be presented today because Sammy was in Mexico.

IV. EMPLOYEES OF THE MONTH PRESENTATIONS FOR APRIL AND MAY

President Kozaites stated that Vice President Saltzgaver would announce the Employees of the Month.

Vice President Saltzgaver announced Mike Meyers, with the Business Operations Bureau, as Administrative Employee of the Month for April.

Ms. Jane Grobaty, as his supervisor, spoke about Mike Meyers.

Vice President Saltzgaver announced Crystal Halona, with the Community Recreation Programs Bureau, as Field Operations Employee of the Month for May.

Ms. Cynthia Fogg, as her supervisor, spoke about Crystal Halona.

President Kozaites stated that the presentation by Emerson Parkside Academy Charter School students would be taken later, when they arrived.

VI. BUDGET PRESENTATION – SUZANNE MASON

Ms. Mason stated that she is a Deputy City Manager in the City Manager's office. Ms. Mason stated that the City has made a point to make sure they have an open and transparent budget process. She discussed the City's budget history and that there were three primary causes for the budget imbalance.

Ms. Mason stated that in the year 2000, the voters in Long Beach decided to reduce the utility users tax by 5% over a five-year period. This was a 50% reduction and eliminated about \$42 million in revenue. In addition, in the year 1998, based on the condition of the economy and the stock market, the Public Employees Retirement System communicated to the City of Long Beach that we had become what they called super-funded. This means that as they projected the City's expenditures for retirement forward on all our current employees, the City would have to contribute nothing based on the growth of our contributions. The City stopped paying into the Public Employees

Retirement System around 1998 or 1999. This was about a \$40 million expense that the City no longer had. Ms. Mason stated that the \$40 million meant a lot and helped the City hold on to programs and even enhanced many Department community programs. In 2002, the stock market took a nosedive and the Public Employee Retirement System stated that the City needed to begin paying again in the year 2005. Citywide, this amounts to about \$50 million, of which the General Fund portion is \$40 million. Ms. Mason stated that the City, along with the rest of California, was experiencing large increases in employee health insurance and workers compensation costs. Those three items combined together created an imbalance of hundreds of millions of dollars in the General Fund.

Ms. Mason stated that in the fall of 2002, the City Council and the Mayor directed City staff to work to develop a three-year strategy to balance the General Fund. The City created a very participative process and many members of the community were very alarmed that the deficit situation had not been shared earlier. She described the Voice Your Choice survey and how City staff came up with the three-year plan in 2003, and became the basis for the way the City budgeted for the next three years. To date, the budgets for fiscal years 2003, 2004, and 2005 eliminated \$92 million of the \$102 million projected structural deficit. Ms. Mason described one-time revenues that helped the City gradually make the reduction. She said that the City Manager is committed to eliminating the remaining \$10 million in structural imbalance in fiscal year 2007. The City is asking for input and Ms. Mason distributed feedback cards and a budget information sheet. She said that these cards are being distributed to all community meetings that staff is attending. She said that the comments and ideas would be given to the City Council. Ms. Mason stated that the City has embraced the idea of optimization as a means of eliminating cost, enhancing revenue, and improving efficiencies and effectiveness. She went over the various efforts of optimization that the City has gone through to reduce expenditures and increase revenue. The City is also looking for significant return with improved cost recovery, which includes revising the fee policy. She mentioned the City's goal of identifying \$2 million in new revenue in the coming year and full cost recovery of services.

Commissioner Antenore asked about the \$2 million in new revenue and where would it come from.

Ms. Mason responded that the City hired an outside consultant to identify cost recovery associated with programs and they are looking at building permits, facility rentals, and fees for services.

Commissioner Antenore asked if the Department were to raise additional fees, would the revenue come back to the Department?

Ms. Mason responded that the General Fund subsidizes a good portion of this department's cost and it helps the Department avoid reductions. The money would be applied proportionately to all departments.

Vice President Saltzgaver recommended strongly that the Commissioners attend the Budget Summit, scheduled for July 8, from 9:00 a.m. to 11:30 a.m., at the Grand.

Ms. Mason also mentioned the Budget Workshop on June 13, at 3:00 p.m., when they would be giving an update on the current year's status of the budget and revenues and a preview of what the community can expect as the City approaches the new budget.

President Kozaites stated that the presentation by Emerson Parkside Academy Charter School students would be taken at this time on the agenda.

V. PRESENTATION BY EMERSON PARKSIDE ACADEMY CHARTER SCHOOL STUDENTS – GREENING PROJECT

Mr. Shane Coyne stated he is the PTA President at Emerson and he is here with the Emerson Student Council and Cindy Young, representing the administrative staff. He said that they are requesting the Parks and Recreation Commission's assistance in removing the blacktop and replacing it with grass at Emerson Elementary School. He read a letter from the school nurse explaining the health reasons for the blacktop to be removed and replaced with grass at Emerson. The school has instituted a no-run policy on the blacktop. He said that Mrs. Young would be the contact person for the school.

Ian Decker, introduced himself as the Student Council President at Emerson, and that they were there to show a PowerPoint presentation to the Commission of the greening project. They would like to put two grass fields at their school, one at each playground, covering most of the playgrounds. He described the negatives and positives of having a grass field at the school. He said that it would cost \$70,000 to install the grass. They raised \$35,000 and they need a lot more money and would like financial support.

President Kozaites complemented the Student Council on their very professional PowerPoint presentation.

Commissioner Antenore applauded the PTA for taking a position on this.

Ms. Young thanked the Commissioners for allowing them to make their presentation and that they would be very interested in working with the community to develop a joint use agreement for use of the green playgrounds.

President Kozaites said that they have support in the community, with the Parks and Recreation Commission, with the City Council, and with the school district, and it is just an issue of finding available funds or donations.

Commissioner Waterfield stated that they raised a lot of money and asked what some kinds of things they did to raise the money.

Ian Decker responded that Vice Mayor Kell donated \$21,000 and they raised about \$18,000 by selling cookie dough and other fundraisers.

Ms. Young stated that they would like to have the project completed by the end of next year.

President Kozaites stated that he would like the square footage of the asphalt on the school. Ms. Young responded that she would get that information to him.

Vice President Saltzgaver mentioned that the Department has a City/Schools Joint Committee, where this could possibly be taken.

It was moved by Vice President Saltzgaver and seconded by Commissioner Satariano to direct staff to make this a priority project. The motion carried unanimously.

President Kozaites stated that they would go back to the order on the agenda.

VII. COMMISSION ACTION ITEMS

#06-0501

PERSONAL SERVICES/INSTRUCTION AGREEMENTS-MONTHLY APPROVAL

It was moved by Commissioner Antenore and seconded by Commissioner Satariano to authorize the Community Recreation Programs Bureau Manager or his or her management designee, to execute the Personal Services and Instruction Agreements and amend Attachment "A" of the agreements as needed. The motion carried unanimously.

Commissioner Antenore stated that she had a question about the first item, Education To Go. She said that the rate is 100% instruction fee; she has never seen that before and asked what that means.

Ms. Janet Day-Anselmo stated that it must be an error and she would have the correction made.

#06-0502

REQUEST BY CALIFORNIA SUN & SURF INTERNATIONAL SOCCER TOURNAMENT FOR WAIVER OF CONCESSION AND FIELD PERMIT FEES

Mr. Derek Barraza introduced his son, Derek Barraza, Jr., a recent graduate of the University of Minnesota, who is taking over for him. He said he would still be advising the group.

Commissioner Satariano said that he heard that last year one of the vendors brought a large bounce house.

Mr. Barraza, Jr. responded that the inflatable bounce house that caused so much trouble last year would not be there this year. He said it was supposed to be a small attraction and turned out to be a large item.

Commissioner Waterfield asked if Sun and Surf was independent of the clubs that participate.

Mr. Barraza responded that they are connected with several of the clubs and is registered with the California Youth Soccer Association, as are all of the other clubs in the area. They are also directly connected with California United Football Club, a club on the west side of Long Beach. He said that they also work with Long Beach Soccer Club and Cerritos Soccer Club.

Mr. Shippey stated that the California Sun and Surf group does a lot of field improvements every year, which really helps the Department out.

It was moved by Commissioner Satariano and seconded by Commissioner George to approve the request by the California Sun and Surf International Soccer Tournament for the waiver of concession and field permit fees with the aforementioned "Conditions of Use." The motion carried unanimously.

Mr. Derek Barraza stated that he would be willing to try and help Emerson Elementary School green their school by connecting them with grants.

VIII. COMMITTEE STATUS REPORTS

A. EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE President Kozaites, Chair

President Kozaites stated that they held their meeting to discuss the agenda.

- Selection of Nomination Committee for 2006-2007 Officers

President Kozaites appointed a Nomination Committee to select the officers for election at next month's meeting. He would like Commissioner Antenore to chair that committee with Commissioner Waterfield and Commissioner George. He asked that they make a recommendation at the meeting next month.

Mr. Shippey said that at the City Council meeting this week, the Mayor was asked to hold off on Commission appointments until the new Mayor and City Councilmembers were sworn in. However, it was brought up that the Parks and Recreation Commission is going to lose a significant number of their members, plus several of the members are new, so she is going to make an exception and appoint the members to the Parks and Recreation Commission.

B. FINANCE AND APPEALS COMMITTEE
Commissioner Satariano, Chair

Mr. Geoff Hall stated that Mr. Hester is attending a National Park and Recreation Summit in which directors from the 50 largest cities in the United States are meeting. The point is to set up a call to action to help secure the future for park and recreation funding. He said that the Mayor is also attending and giving the keynote speech.

Commissioner Satariano went over the financial statement that was included in the packet.

C. PARK SAFETY COMMITTEE
Commissioner Waterfield, Chair

Commissioner Waterfield stated that the Committee did not meet. He said that the report was included in the packet.

D. EQUAL EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITY AND CUSTOMER SATISFACTION COMMITTEE
Commissioner Satariano, Chair

Commissioner Satariano stated that the Committee would meet next quarter and the quarterly report was included in the packet.

E. CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT PROJECTS COMMITTEE
Commissioner George, Chair

Commissioner George stated that the Committee met on May 10 and reviewed the local open space bond item.

F. CITY SCHOOLS/JOINT COMMITTEE
Commissioner Antenore, Chair

Commissioner Antenore stated that the Committee did not meet this month.

G. SPECIAL EVENTS AND RECREATION COMMITTEE
Vice President Saltzgaver, Chair

Vice President Saltzgaver stated that they held a special meeting this month and also held a Committee meeting this month. He said that they did go over the Homeland Neighborhood Cultural Center Strategic Plan and they requested changes. It should be coming back to the full Parks and Recreation Commission next month.

Vice President Saltzgaver stated that the Committee conducted a public hearing at the Recreation Park community center. They had about 150 people attending and spent about two hours listening to testimony.

- Recreation Dog Park

Mr. Geoff Hall stated that they did receive two petitions: one against a dog limit and one for a dog limit. The Committee met on May 8, to discuss the April 26 public meeting and did not make a recommendation at that time. He read the five recommendations of the Committee. He said that generally, someone doing business on City property should have a permit in addition to a business license. Mr. Hall stated that the Committee is recommending a six-month pilot program at the Recreation Dog Park.

Mr. Hall said that the recommendations were mailed to everyone who provided an e-mail address at the public meeting. Since then, he received several phone calls expressing concern about the time of the meeting and that several people would be working during that time. Mr. Hall said that they could e-mail him their concerns and he would provide those e-mails to the Commissioners, which he has done.

Vice President Saltzgaver said that this all started with a petition from someone concerned that dog walkers bring large numbers of dogs to the park and was worried about her individual dog. He said that approximately 85% of the crowd was pro-dog walker. It was their conclusion, short of having some verifiable evidence, that they had no basis to limit the number of dogs that people bring to the dog park. They decided that it might be a good idea to let people know when dog walkers would be around, in case a dog park patron might have a concern about too many dogs in the dog park. The dog park was built for the public, not for dog walkers. The Committee had to come up with a compromise.

Commissioner Satariano stated that a lot of information was shared at the meeting and he changed his mind with all the information he learned at the meeting.

Mr. Hall mentioned that the City's Risk Manager would be making recommendations on the appropriate level of bonding for the dog walkers.

Commissioner Guerra mentioned other cities that have limits on their dogs in their dog parks.

Mr. Hall responded that those dog parks are newer and were created with limits. He said that Recreation Dog Park is older and a limit wasn't considered at that time.

President Kozaites said that the Municipal Code gives a limit of four dogs per residence and if a person has more than four dogs at the dog park, they are more than likely a dog walker. Compliance enforcement will be self-regulated for now. If a person with one dog sees a person with more than four dogs after the dog walker hours, we should let them know where they can call.

Ms. Julie Mayr stated that she is a resident and a dog walker and she knows of dog walkers who are able to handle 23 dogs with no problem. She said that some people are alarmed to see a large amount of dogs with one person and some people don't realize that it can be dangerous for a small dog to be in the dog park area for large dogs. She said that small dogs should use the dog park area for small dogs. She said that it would be a good idea to educate the people who use the dog park.

Vice President Saltzgaver stated that it is very clear that dog walkers are very capable of organizing. He suggested that Ms. Mayr begin educating people at the dog park now.

Ms. Natalie Rice stated that she is for limiting the number of dogs to 12 or so, but not 25, and that the dog walkers should police themselves.

Mr. Jim Walker stated that the Committee has made sound recommendations, but the Department should make sure that all the signage is at eye level. The signage that is currently there is too low.

Mr. Jim Walters stated that he is the president of the Dog Park Association. He said that they are a fund raising group to improve the park. He said that last year they had 150 members and about half the members employ dog walkers who go to the park.

Commissioner Guerra asked if the association was interested in educating the public.

Mr. Walters stated that they do have quarterly meetings; however, no one is interested in training classes. They had classes in the past, but no one attended them. The current rules are on the Association's web site and also posted on the gate.

Mr. Hall stated that the Association's web site is very extensive and has a lot of information on it.

Commissioner Antenore stated that she is concerned about the number of dogs per dog walker, because they are still animals. She said that even docile dogs go crazy.

It was moved by Vice President Saltzgaver and seconded by Commissioner Waterfield to approve the recommendations of the Recreation and Special Events Committee. The motion carried unanimously.

IX. DIRECTOR'S REPORT TO COMMISSION

A. DIRECTOR'S MONTHLY REPORT – APRIL 2006

Commissioner Antenore wondered what "back of the wall" ball was, as mentioned on page 17.

Ms. Sherri Nixon-Joiner said she would find out and get back to her.

X. CORRESPONDENCE

President Kozaites stated that there was no correspondence received.

XI. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

President Kozaites stated there was no unfinished business this month.

XII. NEW BUSINESS

A. LOCAL OPEN SPACE BOND

Mr. Geoff Hall said that a local bond for the acquisition and development of new open space and parks is currently under consideration by the City Council. The bond, if approved, will provide \$25 million for park projects in Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) areas of the City. He explained the Green Vision Strategic Plan, which references the need for more parks in the city.

Mr. Craig Beck introduced himself as the Manager of Administrative and Financial Services Bureau for Community Development and that he is also the Acting Manager for the Redevelopment Bureau. He said that historically the City has used CDBG to fund a lot of parks. He explained the financial background of CDBG funds. He mentioned a study session with the City Council on May 23, at 3:00 p.m., to discuss where the City is at and to discuss the community input received. He said that the bonds would have to come back to the City Council for approval.

Commissioner Antenore stated that she has a concern. She said that she recognizes the need, but she served on the Community Development Advisory Commission for eight and a half years and knows that the funding is never assured. It went down from nearly \$30 million to \$10 million now. She said she is not sure that these funds will continue.

Mr. Beck responded that they know that the fiscal year 2007 amount has been reduced by \$1 million, so the grant would be \$9 million now. The current administration has proposed to severely reduce the block grant program. There was broad support for the CDBG program and that stopped the administration's proposal to eliminate it. He said that the money goes to the local jurisdictions and they decide how best to spend this money. The City has great flexibility in how these dollars are allocated. He said that because of the support, he would be surprised to see it eliminated. He stated that in the worst case scenario, if the City ended up spending General Fund dollars, it would spend \$1 million annually for ten years, or \$10 million of General Fund, to get \$25 million worth of parks. From a financial perspective, this is a good investment.

Vice President Saltzgaver stated that this does not take money away from social services, it comes out of CDBG. If we don't do it now, five years from now this land will cost ten times as much, if it is available at all.

It was moved by Vice President Saltzgaver and seconded by Commissioner Waterfield to recommend to the City Council approval of the proposed open space bond. The motion carried unanimously.

B. APPROVAL OF PLANS TO INSTALL TEMPORARY AIR QUALITY MONITORING EQUIPMENT IN DOUGLAS PARK

It was moved by Vice President Saltzgaver and seconded by Commissioner Antenore to recommend that the City Manager approve the installation of the temporary AQMD Monitoring Equipment, subject to the conditions of an explaining banner, site damage repair, and supervision of the installation and removal of the equipment. The motion carried unanimously.

XI. COMMENTS

A. AUDIENCE

President Kozaites asked for comments from the audience. There were no comments from the audience.

B. STAFF

Ms. Sherri Nixon-Joiner distributed a revised Municipal Band schedule, summer day camp flyers, and the movies in the park schedule.

C. COMMISSIONERS

Vice President Saltzgaver said that he would like an update on the Sea Festival at the June Commission meeting.

XII. NEXT MEETING

The next meeting will be held at 9:00 a.m. on Thursday, June 15, 2006, at El Dorado Park West, in the Senior Center Library, 2800 Studebaker Road, Long Beach.

XIII. ADJOURNMENT

President Kozaites adjourned the meeting at 11:31 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Robin Black
Executive Secretary
to the Director

c: Phil T. Hester, Director of Parks, Recreation and Marine